
**PART G-1
MEANS OF EGRESS**

WAC

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WAC 296-24-55001 Definitions.

- (1) **Approved.** For the purposes of chapter 296-24 WAC, Parts G-1, G-2 and G-3, approved shall mean listed or approved equipment by a nationally recognized testing laboratory. Refer to WAC 296-24-58503 (3)(c)(iv)(A) for definition of listed, and federal regulation 29 CFR 1910.7 for nationally recognized testing laboratory.

- (2) **Emergency action plan.** A plan for a workplace, or parts thereof, describing what procedures the employer and employees must take to ensure employee safety from fire or other emergencies.

- (3) **Emergency escape route.** The route that employees are directed to follow in the event they are required to evacuate the workplace or seek a designated refuge area.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 49.17 RCW. 94-15-096 (Order 94-07), § 296-24-55001, filed 7/20/94, effective 9/20/94; 88-23-054 (Order 88-25), § 296-24-55001, filed 11/14/88. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.040 and 49.17.050. 82-02-003 (Order 81-32), § 296-24-55001, filed 12/24/81; Order 73-5, § 296-24-55001, filed 5/9/73 and Order 73-4, § 296-24-55001, filed 5/7/73.]

WAC 296-24-56525 Automatic sprinkler systems. All automatic sprinkler systems shall be continuously maintained in reliable operating condition at all times, and such periodic inspections and tests shall be made as are necessary to assure proper maintenance.

[Order 73-5, § 296-24-56525, filed 5/9/73 and Order 73-4, § 296-24-56525, filed 5/7/73.]

WAC 296-24-56527 Fire alarm signaling systems. The employer shall assure that fire alarm signaling systems are maintained and tested in accordance with the requirements of WAC 296-24-63107.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.040 and 49.17.050. 82-02-003 (Order 81-32), § 296-24-56527, filed 12/24/81; Order 73-5, § 296-24-56527, filed 5/9/73 and Order 73-4, § 296-24-56527, filed 5/7/73.]

WAC 296-24-567 Employee emergency plans and fire prevention plans.

- (1) Emergency action plan.
- (a) Scope and application. This subdivision applies to all emergency action plans required by a particular WISHA standard. The emergency action plan shall be in writing, and shall cover those designated actions employers and employees must take to ensure employee safety from fire and other emergencies.
- (b) Elements. The following elements, at a minimum, shall be included in the plan:
- (i) Emergency escape procedures and emergency escape route assignments;
- (ii) Procedures to be followed by employees who remain to operate critical plant operations before they evacuate;
- (iii) Procedures to account for all employees after emergency evacuation has been completed;

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- (iv) Rescue and medical duties for those employees who are to perform them;
 - (v) The preferred means of reporting fires and other emergencies; and
 - (vi) Names or regular job titles of persons or departments who can be contacted for further information or explanation of duties under the plan.
 - (c) Alarm systems. You must establish an employee alarm system which complies with WAC 296-800-310. The employee alarm system must provide warning for necessary emergency action as called for in your emergency action plan. The employee alarm must be distinctive and recognizable as a signal to perform actions designed under the emergency action plan.
 - (d) Evacuation. The employer shall establish in the emergency action plan the types of evacuation to be used in emergency circumstances.
 - (e) Training.
 - (i) Before implementing the emergency action plan, the employer shall designate and train a sufficient number of persons to assist in the safe and orderly emergency evacuation of employees.
 - (ii) The employer shall review the plan with each employee covered by the plan at the following times:
 - (A) Initially when the plan is developed;
 - (B) Whenever the employee's responsibilities or designated actions under the plan change; and
 - (C) Whenever the plan is changed.
 - (iii) The employer shall review with each employee upon initial assignment those parts of the plan which the employee must know to protect the employee in the event of an emergency. The written plan shall be kept at the workplace and made available for employee review.
- (2) Fire prevention plan.
 - (a) Scope and application. This subsection applies to all fire prevention plans required by a particular WISHA standard. The fire prevention plan shall be in writing.
 - (b) Elements. The following elements, at a minimum, shall be included in the fire prevention plan:
 - (i) A list of the major workplace fire hazards and their proper handling and storage procedures, potential ignition sources (such as welding, smoking and others) and their control procedures, and the type of fire protection equipment or systems which can control a fire involving them;
 - (ii) Names or regular job titles of those personnel responsible for maintenance of equipment and systems installed to prevent or control ignitions or fires; and

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- (iii) Names or regular job titles of those personnel responsible for control of fuel source hazards.
- (c) Housekeeping. The employer shall control accumulations of flammable and combustible waste materials and residues so that they do not contribute to a fire emergency. The housekeeping procedures shall be included in the written fire prevention plan.
- (d) Training.
 - (i) The employer shall apprise employees of the fire hazards of the materials and processes to which they are exposed.
 - (ii) The employer shall review with each employee upon initial assignment those parts of the fire prevention plan which the employee must know to protect the employee in the event of an emergency. The written plan shall be kept in the workplace and made available for employee review.
- (e) Maintenance. The employer shall regularly and properly maintain, according to established procedures, equipment and systems installed on heat producing equipment to prevent accidental ignition of combustible materials. The maintenance procedures shall be included in the written fire prevention plan.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, .040, .050. 01-11-038 (Order 99-36), § 296-24-567, filed 05/09/01, effective 09/01/01. Statutory Authority: Chapter 49.17 RCW. 89-11-035 (Order 89-03), § 296-24-567, filed 5/15/89, effective 6/30/89. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.040 and 49.17.050. 82-02-003 (Order 81-32), § 296-24-567, filed 12/24/81.]

WAC 296-24-56701 Appendix. This appendix serves as a nonmandatory guideline to assist employers in complying with the appropriate requirements.

- (1) Employee emergency plans. Emergency action plan elements. The emergency action plan should address emergencies that the employer may reasonably expect in the workplace. Examples are: Fire, toxic chemical releases; hurricanes; tornadoes; blizzards; floods; and others. The elements of the emergency action plan presented in WAC 296-24-567 (1)(b) can be supplemented by the following to more effectively achieve employee safety and health in an emergency. The employer should list in detail the procedures to be taken by those employees who have been selected to remain behind to care for essential plant operations until their evacuations become absolutely necessary. Essential plant operations may include the monitoring of plant power supplies, water supplies, and other essential services which cannot be shut down for every emergency alarm. Essential plant operations may also include chemical or manufacturing processes which must be shut down in stages or steps where certain employees must be present to assure that safe shut down procedures are completed.

The use of floor plans or workplace maps which clearly show the emergency escape routes should be included in the emergency action plan. Color coding will aid employees in determining their route assignments.

The employer should also develop and explain in detail what rescue and medical first aid duties are to be performed and by whom. All employees are to be told what actions they are to take in these emergency situations that the employer anticipates may occur in the workplace.

- (2) Emergency evacuation. At the time of an emergency, employees should know what type of evacuation is necessary and what their role is in carrying out the plan. In some cases where the emergency is very grave, total and immediate evacuation of all employees is necessary. In other emergencies, a partial evacuation of nonessential employees with a delayed evacuation of others may be necessary for continued plant

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operation. In some cases, only those employees in the immediate area of the fire may be expected to evacuate or move to a safe area such as when a local application fire suppression system discharge employee alarm is sounded. Employees must be sure that they know what is expected of them in all such emergency possibilities which have been planned in order to provide assurance of their safety from fire or other emergency.

The designation of refuge or safe areas for evacuation should be determined and identified in the plan. In a building divided into fire zones by fire walls, the refuge area may still be within the same building but in a different zone from where the emergency occurs.

Exterior refuge or safe areas may include parking lots, open fields or streets which are located away from the site of the emergency and which provide sufficient space to accommodate the employees. Employees should be instructed to move away from the exit discharge doors of the building, and to avoid congregating close to the building where they may hamper emergency operations.

- (3) Emergency action plan training. The employer should assure that an adequate number of employees are available at all times during working hours to act as evacuation wardens so that employees can be swiftly moved from the danger location to the safe areas. Generally, one warden for each twenty employees in the workplace should be able to provide adequate guidance and instruction at the time of a fire emergency. The employees selected or who volunteer to serve as wardens should be trained in the complete workplace layout and the various alternative escape routes from the workplace. All wardens and fellow employees should be made aware of handicapped employees who may need extra assistance, such as using the buddy system, and of hazardous areas to be avoided during emergencies. Before leaving, wardens should check rooms and other enclosed spaces in the workplace for employees who may be trapped or otherwise unable to evacuate the area.

After the desired degree of evacuation is completed, the wardens should be able to account for or otherwise verify that all employees are in the safe areas.

In buildings with several places of employment, employers are encouraged to coordinate their plans with the other employers in the building. A building-wide or standardized plan for the whole building is acceptable provided that the employers inform their respective employees of their duties and responsibilities under the plan. The standardized plan need not be kept by each employer in the multi-employer building provided there is an accessible location within the building where the plan can be reviewed by affected employees. When multi-employer, building-wide plans are not feasible, employers should coordinate their plans with the other employers within the building to assure that conflicts and confusion are avoided during time of emergencies. In multistory buildings where more than one employer is on a single floor, it is essential that these employers coordinate their plans with each other to avoid conflicts and confusion.

- (4) Fire prevention housekeeping. The standard calls for the control of accumulations of flammable and combustible waste materials.

It is the intent of this standard to assure that hazardous accumulations of combustible waste materials are controlled so that a fast developing fire, rapid spread of toxic smoke, or an explosion will not occur. This does not necessarily mean that each room has to be swept each day. Employers and employees should be aware of the hazardous properties of materials in their workplaces, and the degree of hazard each poses. Certainly, oil soaked rags have to be treated differently than general paper trash in office areas. However, large accumulations of waste paper or corrugated boxes, etc., can pose a significant fire hazard. Accumulations of materials which can cause large fires or generate dense smoke that are easily ignited or may start from spontaneous combustion, are the types of materials with which this standard is concerned. Such combustible materials may be easily ignited by matches, welder's sparks, cigarettes, and similar low level energy ignition sources.

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- (5) Maintenance of equipment under the fire prevention plan. Certain equipment is often installed in workplaces to control heat sources or to detect fuel leaks. An example is a temperature limit switch often found on deep-fat food fryers found in restaurants. There may be similar switches for high temperature dip tanks, or flame failure and flashback arrester devices on furnaces and similar heat producing equipment. If these devices are not properly maintained or if they become inoperative, a definite fire hazard exists. Again employees and supervisors should be aware of the specific type of control devices on equipment involved with combustible materials in the workplace and should make sure, through periodic inspection or testing, that these controls are operable. Manufacturers' recommendations should be followed to assure proper maintenance procedures.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.040 and 49.17.050. 82-02-003 (Order 81-32), § 296-24-56701, filed 12/24/81.]